

VETERANS UPDATE

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TOBACCO AND YOUR HEALTH



It's been said before, but it's true: you can quit smoking. And VA wants to help!

Many people associate tobacco use with lung cancer, but exposure to cigarette smoke can also result in an increased risk of:

- Pancreatic cancer
- Cancers of the throat or mouth
- Kidney cancer
- Stomach cancer
- Cancers of the blood

- Bladder cancer

Tobacco can also worsen other health conditions you may have; it can have a negative affect on mental health conditions, for example.

The benefits of quitting are immediate. It can lower your blood pressure and improve your lung function. Quitting also reduces your risk of cancer and heart disease, and you'll have more money when you're not buying cigarettes!

UPCOMING EVENTS

Nov. 10, 10 - 11:30 a.m.

Veterans Day Ceremony

5th Floor Auditorium. Join us in recognizing the service and sacrifices of the men and women who served in uniform.

Nov. 18, 2 - 3:30 p.m.

VBA & VAMC Joint Veteran Town Hall Meeting

5th Floor Auditorium. Join leadership for an update and ask questions.

When you decide to take this important step in improving your health, VA is there for you. Enrolled Veterans have access to medication and counseling.

Talk to your VA health care provider about quitting or call the VA smoking quit-line today at 855-QUIT-VET (855-784-8838).

GET YOUR FLU SHOT, BEFORE THE FLU GETS YOU!

Have you gotten your flu shot, yet? If not, FREE flu vaccinations are available to enrolled Veterans and staff!

No appointment is required and clinics are running through Nov. 22:

- Providence VA Medical Center, Basement E-wing lobby, weekdays 8:30 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.
- Middletown, walk-in Wednesdays 8 a.m. to 3 p.m.
- New Bedford, walk-in Tuesdays 8 a.m. to 3 p.m.
- Hyannis, walk-in Monday to Friday 1 to 3 p.m.

November not good for you? No problem! You can still get your flu shot at Primary Care and many specialty clinics after November.

Already have a flu shot from somewhere else? Let us know by calling (401) 273-7100, ext. 1499, or sending a secure message through MyHealthVet, so we can update your medical records.



BILL — A MOVE! SUCCESS STORY



Marine Corps Veteran William Lewis before, left, and after he began participating in the MOVE! program in earnest upon learning of a possible heart attack, and high cholesterol, blood sugar and blood pressure levels at the Hyannis VA Outpatient Clinic in April 2016. After five months, he had lost nearly 75 pounds, and his cholesterol, blood sugar and blood pressure levels were within normal ranges. (Photos courtesy of William Lewis.)

William “Bill” Lewis started the MOVE! program in December 2014, but didn’t take it seriously until April 26, 2016.

“My primary care doctor, Monty VanBeber and nurse practitioner, Cheryl Collins, said my EKG results suggested I may have had a heart attack in my sleep,” said Lewis, a Marine Corps Veteran, about his appointment that day. “My cholesterol, blood sugars and blood pressure were all too high.”

Lewis added that his weight had sky-rocketed to 310 pounds, a body mass index, or BMI, of 45 for a man of his height of 5 feet 8 inches. A normal BMI usually ranges from around 18 to 25; over 30 is considered to be dangerously overweight, increasing risk of serious health problems.

MOVE! is a weight management health promotion program designed to improve the lives of Veterans. In 2015, more than three quarters of Veterans receiving care in VHA facilities

nationwide were considered to be overweight or obese.

Clinician-led MOVE! groups meet regularly and follow a structured format for weight loss by increasing physical activity and encouraging healthy eating behaviors.

Lewis credits the Hyannis VA Clinic’s MOVE! program for his success after he began his participation in earnest following his appointment April 26.

“I’ve lost close to 75 pounds and 11 points BMI ... in five months,” said Lewis. He added that his goal is to reach 180 pounds by April 26, 2017. “I’ve been on an exercise program and eating all the right foods, thanks to Deb Gibbons.”

Debra Gibbons is a registered dietitian at the Hyannis VA Clinic who works with Lewis and other MOVE! participants.

While Lewis admits he still has a way to go, he says that his cholesterol, blood sugar and blood pressure levels are now all in the normal range. “I have a lot of energy now and always look forward to



Providence VA Medical Center

830 Chalkstone Ave
Providence, RI 02908
401-273-7100

Patient Call Center (PCC):
401-457-3336

Veteran’s Crisis Line:
800-273-8255 press 1

Website:

www.providence.va.gov

Facebook:

[facebook.com/
VAProvidence](https://facebook.com/VAProvidence)

going to the gym,” he said, where he participates in a regimen of 3 days of cardiovascular exercise and 3 days of weight training, with one day off each week to rest. He added that he now sleeps better and that most of the joint pain he had suffered is gone.

Veterans interested in the MOVE! Program should ask their primary care provider, or call Brooke Rao, the MOVE! coordinator at (401) 273-7100, ext. 2730.

When asked what he would like other Veterans to know about the MOVE! program, Lewis said, “That they shouldn’t give up. I’m living proof ... you can lose weight and look good at 65!”